

**Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, June 15, 2012**

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16. 2012 [Teacher Incentive Fund](#) applications due July 27

**Other:**

17. VFW announces audio-essay [scholarship contest](#)
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## Action Item Calendar

**Today** (June 15): Deadline for forming [School Data Leadership Teams](#)  
**Wednesday** (June 20): TCS readiness questions response due (see below)  
June 22: Deadline for principals to [sign off on TCS data](#)  
June 29: Final reports on [Early Intervention Services](#) due  
June 30: Schools and districts submit [final personnel assignments](#)  
July 2: Emergency-drill reports due (see below)  
July 13: Physical-restraint reports due (see below)  
July 15: Deadline for final reporting of [evaluation ratings](#)  
July 15: Deadline for submitting [school-construction forms](#)  
July 27: Deadline for reporting final evaluation ratings (see below)

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### *Notes from Commissioner Gist:*

#### **1. RIDE to send updated Race to the Top Scopes of Work to LEAs**

I am excited that we have reached the halfway point in our Race to the Top! As we approach Year 3 of implementation, I want to thank you for your work in supporting the principles we jointly committed to in our Race to the Top application and in your LEA Scope of Work. While our work is challenging at times, I am pleased that we have continued our partnership and that we are moving forward toward attaining our ambitious goals for improving student achievement, closing achievement gaps, raising the graduation rate, and raising the rates on college enrollment and retention.

To continue the commitments we made in our partnership agreement and to ensure that our initiatives at the state level are well aligned with the ongoing work in your schools, the team at RIDE has reviewed and updated our state Scope of Work and all local Scopes of Work. These revisions reflect what we have learned over the past two years of our Race to the Top.

We have posted our state Scope of Work, along with a generic version of the LEA Scope of Work, on the RIDE website [here](#). Next week, we will send you your specific LEA Scope of Work appendix, along with an appendix containing your student-achievement results to date compared against the Race to the Top goals.

I would encourage you to review both the documents to get a comprehensive view of the state tasks and your LEA tasks over the remaining period of the grant. Please note that the appendix we will send you does not change or amend our joint memorandum of understanding or your original Scope of Work commitments. Therefore, you won't need to take any action in regard to the materials we will be sending; rather, we intend this information to be a helpful tool as you begin planning for Years 3 and 4 of our Race to the Top.

#### **2. General Assembly approves budget that supports education**

I am very pleased that the budget that the General Assembly approved this week retains Governor Chafee's proposal to fully fund the Funding Formula for aid to education and to accelerate the payments to districts that are currently underfunded.

The budget adds \$32 million to fund Year 2 of the Funding Formula, including \$11 million to advance aid to underfunded districts. Total state education budget is about \$932 million. The total education aid to LEAs is about \$750 million, an increase of 4.6 percent. I applaud this commitment to public education and to economic relief for our cities and towns.

We at RIDE are also pleased that the budget supports technology, including expanded bandwidth and the \$20-million technology bond, which will bring Internet wireless access to every Rhode Island classroom. Wireless access is essential so that our schools are able to engage in innovations powered by technology and so that our students can have access to the many opportunities available through digital learning.

The budget also retains Governor Chafee's recommendations for:

- \$3 million to support career and technical education;
- \$1.4 million for early-childhood education (which will fund the ongoing PreK Pilot Program);
- An increase of \$1 million for to help school districts meet high-cost special-education commitments.

We are truly fortunate that in these difficult economic times, when many states are cutting the budget for education, we have a Governor and a legislature that recognizes that an investment in education today will ensure the well-being of Rhode Islanders and the economic prosperity of our state for many years to come.

***From RIDE:***

### **3. RIDE posts updated version of guide on preventing bullying**

Please see this notice from our Office of School, Community, and Academic Supports:

The [Guide to Preventing Bullying, Teen Dating Violence, and Sexual Violence in Rhode Island Schools](#) has been amended to include the Rhode Island Safe Schools Act and Statewide Bullying Policy, which goes into effect on June 30.

### **4. Physical-restraint reports due at RIDE by July 13 – Action Item**

Please see this notice from our Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports:

Rhode Island has had Physical Restraint Regulations in effect since September 1, 2002. These regulations require all public education programs to have physical-restraint policies in place, which must be reviewed annually, be provided to staff, and made available to parents. In addition, training for all staff must be provided annually, within the first month of school (within the first month of employment for new staff), and

advanced training must be provided for staff identified to serve as a schoolwide resource. A detailed incident report must be kept on file, and parents should be informed as soon as possible (not later than two school days) regarding every incident of restraint involving their child. A procedure for receiving and investigating complaints should be included in policies. The full content of the Rhode Island Physical Restraint Regulations is posted at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Regents/Docs/RegentsRegulations/PHYS%20REST%20REGS%20FINAL.pdf>.

For a sample Physical Restraint/Crisis Intervention Report, see:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/oscas/documents/physical\\_restraint\\_form.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/oscas/documents/physical_restraint_form.pdf)

Though RIDE does not collect specific incident reports, state regulations require that each [public education program](#) report incidents of physical restraint to RIDE on an annual basis. The data-collection instructions can be accessed through this link:

[https://www.eride.ri.gov/eride2K5/RestraintCollection/RestraintInstructions\\_060311.pdf](https://www.eride.ri.gov/eride2K5/RestraintCollection/RestraintInstructions_060311.pdf)

Please submit data for your schools by **July 13**. Contact Alice Woods, at 222-8983 or [alice.woods@ride.ri.gov](mailto:alice.woods@ride.ri.gov), with any questions.

**5. Response to questions on Teacher-Course-Student data-submission readiness due Wednesday**

Please see this notice from our Office of Network and Information Systems:

As you may know, the Teacher-Course-Student (TCS) data collection is a very important dataset and affects a lot of RIDE initiatives. During the current school year, we collected TCS data only for educators in grades 3 through 7 who were identified as a contributing educator in either English language arts or mathematics. In the coming school year, RIDE will be expanding this data collection to include all grades and all subjects. We will collect information that is necessary for student-level access to data by educators in the Instructional Management System (IMS) and the Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS).

We want to make sure that all LEAs are ready to begin submitting data to RIDE. We understand that, through the month of August, teacher and student assignments continue to change; however, we are asking that you begin reporting your TCS data as early as possible during the month of August and then that you continue to update the data as changes are made throughout the year. In preparing for the coming school year, we have reached out to your data manager for responses to the questions below, which we would like to receive as soon as possible but no later than **Wednesday** (June 20). The questions are:

On what date will you be able to begin submitting to RIDE daily TCS (course, section, staff and student) data for the coming school year for all grades and all subjects?

What is the earliest date that you would be able to begin submitting to RIDE daily course, section and staff data for the coming school year for all grades and all subjects? *(Note: does not include the TCS student submission)*

What is the earliest date that you would be able to begin submitting to RIDE daily course and section data for the coming school year for all grades and all subjects? *(Note: does not include the TCS student and staff submissions)*

If you have any questions, please contact the HelpDesk at [helpdesk@ride.ri.gov](mailto:helpdesk@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8400.

**6. RIDE gathering data to develop Early Warning System; informational webinar scheduled for June 25**

Please see this message from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

*Data gathering for the Early Warning System:*

A major aspect of our Race to the Top grant addresses the use of data in several domains, including educator effectiveness, teacher certification, quality of educator preparation, and utilizing early warning indicators to predict student graduation and postsecondary success. The recently adopted Secondary School Regulations include a mandate that all schools implement an Early Warning System (EWS) to monitor student progress in grades 6 through 12 for measures that indicate risk of students disengaging and potentially dropping out of school. RIDE is now in the development phase of the Rhode Island Early Warning System (RI-EWS).

The RI-EWS is a tool that enables administrators and teachers to identify students at risk for dropping out of school through a number of warning signs that these students may demonstrate during their middle-school and early high-school years. The different warning signs are measured through indicators, or metrics, that represent a larger problem in the student's academic and behavioral profile. Indicators of dropout risk, and the benchmark levels at which these indicators note that risk, vary both demographically and geographically, making it important to use historical data from multiple locales to determine these indicator categories. RIDE is working with UPD Consulting to identify appropriate indicators and to benchmark levels for the use of this program at the school and district level with current student populations in the fall. The data requested earlier this month will enable RIDE to determine the predictive indicators and the benchmarks for those indicators that will empower districts and schools to intervene with their most at-risk students.

The project is currently in the data-collection and planning phase. The team is performing quality checks on state and LEA data. LEA engagement in this process is *voluntary*. Additionally, the team is collaborating with the Instructional Management System (IMS) vendor, in whose platform (EXCEED RTI) the EWS tool will be housed. It will aggregate multiple separate data tables into one integrated database. Multiple sets of indicators will be developed and tested throughout the summer, and, once

approved, the tool will go live in the late fall. Students with their associated indicators will be displayed as a report in the IMS Exceed application. EXCEED users will be able to closely monitor indicator levels and changes with different risk levels represented by different colors assigned to the risk benchmarks. For instance, a student judged to be at high risk based on attendance problems would have his or her attendance indicator colored in red in this report.

*Webinar on the Early Warning System:*

The RI-EWS will be accessed through the RtI module in the Instructional Management System. RIDE is presenting an informational webinar to provide school and district leaders with essential information about how the system works and expected levels of engagement by LEAs.

The webinar will be presented on Monday, June 25, at 11 a.m.

Click here to register for the webinar:

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/148948086>

If you have any questions about this project or would like to participate in the provision of data, please contact Rosemary Burns, at 222-8483 or [Rosemary.Burns@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Rosemary.Burns@ride.ri.gov).

**7. Emergency-drill reports due July 2 – Action Item**

Please see this notice from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

All schools are required to upload each emergency drill conducted for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Please refer to [RIGL 16-21-4](#) for details. Data is uploaded through eRIDE, using your username and password and then clicking the Emergency Drill icon. If you have any technical issues uploading this data, please contact the help desk, at [helpdesk@ride.ri.gov](mailto:helpdesk@ride.ri.gov). If you have any policy questions, please contact [Rosemary.Burns@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Rosemary.Burns@ride.ri.gov).

**8. RIDE releases update on transition to Common Core State Standards, on the Comprehensive Assessment System**

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

We are pleased to announce the release of a Quarterly Update Memo sharing the highlights of the past quarter and looking ahead to next quarter for the Transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and for the Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS). Some highlights include:

*“After Study of the Common Core State Standards”* Workshop supports, a tool to aid review of capacity to implement the CCSS, and other resources were posted to our website this quarter:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/CommonCoreMaterials.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/CommonCoreMaterials.aspx).

The *Study of the Common Core State Standards* workshops are wrapping up. During the past quarter, more than 400 educators participated in 12 sessions. To date, we have exceeded our goal of 4,000 educators. Thank you, educators, for your hard work!

Three additional CAS Monthly Webinars – PARCC, The Rhode Island Growth Model, and Assessment in Early Childhood Education – have taken place, and the recordings posted on the our website, at:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/CAS.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/CAS.aspx)

Formative Assessment PD online modules have entered the technical-build phase, where the course content is being transformed into dynamic, interactive online modules. Modules 1 and 2 will be accessible in the fall for the LEAs launching in September.

The Interim Assessments project has held the first round of item review for ELA and mathematics content, and the work is progressing steadily toward the January 2013 release. Updates will continue to be posted, at:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Interim.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Interim.aspx).

Data Use PD has been moving forward with scheduling and planning the content for the professional-development series beginning in August. Additional guidance on the upcoming PD and on selecting School Data Leadership Teams and District Data Liaisons can be found at:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/DataUsePD.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/DataUsePD.aspx).

The memo can be viewed online, at:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/QuarterlyUpdates/FY12-Q4\\_CAS-CCSS\\_Quarterly\\_Memo.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/QuarterlyUpdates/FY12-Q4_CAS-CCSS_Quarterly_Memo.pdf).

Please visit our website for more resources:

[www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx)!

## **9. PARCC seeks public comment on literacy frameworks**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The state-led Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is seeking a second round of public comment on the Model Content Frameworks for

English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy as part of an on-going development process to ensure the frameworks meet the needs of educators, curriculum directors and school leaders.

In November 2011, PARCC released Model Content Frameworks to inform item development and to support implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). That release was based on multiple rounds of feedback, including a public comment period in August 2011. Now that the frameworks have been in the field for several months, PARCC is again looking for the education community to provide feedback on the frameworks in order to clarify any language or make any necessary corrections.

The initial public review resulted in a number of conceptual changes in the frameworks, which are detailed through a recorded webinar and presentations at:

[www.parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks](http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks).

Download the [PARCC Model Content Frameworks for ELA/Literacy](#) in PDF format.

The public comment survey for ELA/Literacy will be open until June 27. Users can access the feedback survey at [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org). PARCC will revise the frameworks during the month of July with the goal of releasing final versions later this summer. Once the frameworks are final, PARCC will hold public webinars to walk through the changes. Information about the webinars will be available on the PARCC website later this summer.

PARCC also will seek public comment on the Model Content Frameworks for Mathematics, including updates to the frameworks for high school, starting June 25.

#### **10. Roster verification for principals due June 22 – Action Item**

Please see this notice from our Division of Educator Excellence and Instructional Effectiveness:

This is a quick reminder that all principals of schools with any students in grades 3 through 7 must review and sign off on their teachers' rosters by June 22. Principals should access the Roster Verification (RV) application through the eRide portal, at [www.eride.ri.gov](http://www.eride.ri.gov), using their regular login and password. Password help is available online, at [www.eride.ri.gov/users/PasswordRetrieve.asp](http://www.eride.ri.gov/users/PasswordRetrieve.asp). If a principal does not have an eRide account, he or she should contact his or her district data manager. RIDE has developed RV training materials, which are available at [www.ride.ri.gov/29](http://www.ride.ri.gov/29), along with a chart of showing the current percentage of principals in each LEA who have signed off on rosters. Help with the process is available at [rosterverification@ride.ri.gov](mailto:rosterverification@ride.ri.gov). Thank you for your efforts on this critical process.

#### **11. SurveyWorks initial reports posted on InfoWorks page of RIDE website**

Please see this notice from our Office of Data, Analysis, and Research:



Initial results from the latest SurveyWorks surveys will be released on Monday. School-level reports will be sent to each principal via e-mail. Reports will also be posted on InfoWorks:

<http://infoworks.ride.ri.gov/>.

To find the initial results for your schools, first search for a school by selecting "School and District Data," then scroll down and expand the Other > SurveyWorks section and click on the survey icon(s). These results are in PDF format only. Over the next few weeks, we will integrate more school and district SurveyWorks data into InfoWorks in chart and graph form. We are also in the process of developing a statewide report containing key findings. Once this report is produced, we plan to notify the media and the public, and we will inform you in advance of this public release.

If you have any questions about the survey results or about next year's survey administration, please contact Jan Mermin, at 222-4710 or [jan.mermin@ride.ri.gov](mailto:jan.mermin@ride.ri.gov).

## **12. RIDE shares template for reporting aggregate evaluation ratings – Action Item**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

RIDE is collecting aggregate teacher and building-administrator final evaluating ratings for the current school year from every LEA, regardless of which educator-evaluation system is being implemented. The aggregate ratings are being collected for federal reporting purposes.

A template (Excel) for reporting aggregate final evaluation ratings is posted on the RIDE website. LEAs can send their aggregate final evaluation ratings to Jacqueline McKinney, at [jacqueline.mckinney@ride.ri.gov](mailto:jacqueline.mckinney@ride.ri.gov). The deadline for reporting final ratings to RIDE is **July 27**. Starting with the 2012-13 school year, final educator-evaluation ratings will be collected automatically through the Educator Performance and Support System.

To access the template for reporting aggregate final evaluation ratings, please visit the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/EdEvalAnnounce.aspx>

## **13. RIDE posts information about the Educator Performance and Support System**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

The Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS) is an online tool to support high-quality evaluation implementation, maximize educators' time and resources, and provide a single data system for educator evaluation. The EPSS provides a tested, yet customized online system to streamline and support our educator-evaluation work throughout the state.

To access additional information about the EPSS, including a detailed overview of the system, answers to frequently asked questions, and sample screen shots of the evaluation-related forms within EPSS, please visit the EPSS page at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/EPSS.aspx>

#### **14. RIDE conducting survey on school counseling**

Please see the following message from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

The following survey has been developed to gain input from each school counselor in the state. During the past year, RIDE has adopted new regulations for secondary education, career and technical education, and virtual learning. In a review of these new regulations in relationship to the current Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Programs, RIDE organized a Rhode Island School Counseling Advisory Board, with representation from school counselors, higher education, and the Higher Education Assistance Authority. The data from this survey will be used by the Advisory Board to design supports for school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs. The School Counseling Survey will be open from Monday (June 18) through Monday, **June 25**. The survey can be found at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/omp/secondary/SchoolCounseling.aspx>

If you have any questions, please contact Diana Crowley ([diana.crowley@ride.ri.gov](mailto:diana.crowley@ride.ri.gov)).

#### **15. Instructional Management System be unavailable for 10 days due to data transfer**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

RIDE will be moving the statewide Instructional Management System (IMS) to the permanent hardware. This means two things for districts:

The IMS will be unavailable from Wednesday (June 20) through June 30. During this time, no users will be able to log into the system. This means no training will be available and loading of district curriculum will have to be suspended.

No data already entered in the IMS will be lost; it will be transferred to the new database. Your LEA will have the opportunity to identify data that you would like to have removed from the system before the system goes live in September.

Any questions may be directed to Bob Measel ([robert.measel@ride.ri.gov](mailto:robert.measel@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8480) or Heather Heineke ([heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov) to 222-8493).

***From the U.S. Department of Education:***

#### **16. 2012 Teacher Incentive Fund applications due July 27**

Please see this notice from the Office of Communications and Outreach:

Last week, the Department announced the final application period for the 2012 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) competition. This year's \$285 million competition includes a new focus on supporting district-wide evaluation systems that reward success, offer greater professional opportunities, and drive decision-making on recruitment, development, and retention of effective teachers and principals. It also invites applications for a separate competition that centers on improving science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) instruction. School districts may apply for a share of funds either individually or in partnership with one or more districts. States and not-for-profit organizations are also invited to apply in conjunction with one or more districts.

Grants will be awarded to applicants that demonstrate readiness to transition to a new evaluation system, involvement of teachers and principals in developing a plan, and effective methods for placing and keeping talent in hard-to-staff schools. Funds would support performance-based compensation and related professional development, as well as the creation and improvement of systems and tools that benefit the entire district. Evaluation systems will incorporate performance tiers and multiple measures, including student growth. Like the 2010 competition, TIF 2012 gives preference to new applicants. Also, new competitive preferences have been added to support salary structures that incorporate teacher and principal performance and applications serving rural districts.

The Department anticipates awarding around 30 grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$12 million, depending on the size of the grantee and the content outlined in the plan. Awards will supply first-year funding. Additional funding, for years 2 through 5, are dependent on Congressional action. Applications are due **July 27**. Winners will be announced in September. For more information, see:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/>.

***Other:***

**17. VFW announces audio-essay scholarship contest**

Please see this notice about a scholarship opportunity from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW):

Each year, more than 51,000 high school students from across the country enter to win a share of the \$2.2 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the VFW's Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition.

Knowing that a democratic society needs nurturing, the VFW established the Voice of Democracy program (VOD) in 1947 to provide students grades 9-12 the opportunity to express themselves in regards to democratic ideas and principles.

The national first-place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's American university, college, or vocational or technical school. Other national

scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$16,000, and the first-place winner from each (State) VFW Department wins an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

The Voice of Democracy Program is open to students in grades 9-12, who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States and its territories.

[Click here for the 2012-2013 Voice of Democracy entry form.](#)

The deadline to enter the 2012-13 program is **November 1**. The theme for 2012-13 is: "Is Our Constitution Still Relevant?"

Students should record their reading of the draft to a CD. The recording can be no shorter than 3 minutes and no longer than 5 minutes (plus or minus 5 seconds).

Entries begin at the Post level. Once the student creates their essay and completes burning the audio version to a CD, they can submit their typed version, CD, and the Voice of Democracy entry form to their local participating VFW Post by the November 1 deadline.

For more information, see:

<http://www.vfw.org/Community/Programs/>

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***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>